

# Marketing by Our Members

## Interview with Professor Marc Logman

The European Marketing Confederation has published a new “translation into practice”. The article, written by Professor Marc Logman, studies the limits to growing customer value.



Professor Marc Logman

Part time Professor, Leuven University

“ A company’s past behaviour creates present and future expectations from a customer’s point of view ”

- **You have been working on the “translation” into practice of the piece of research; “Limits to growing customer value: Being squeezed between the past and the future” Why did you choose this particular piece of research?**

Exploring new growth options within a companies’ customer value proposition is almost inevitable, because every company will face saturated markets, intense competition and more demanding customers at some stage in their development. Whilst the subject of new growth and the intersection of marketing and innovation fit into my own research interests, it also needs to be of vital consideration for marketers in the current economic climate, so it was very timely to concentrate on this.

- **So in your opinion and experience, does past strategic behavior leave enough space for innovation?**

The case studies in my article have demonstrated this to be a complicated question. This is because a company’s past behavior creates present and future expectations from a customer’s point of view. For example, Apple is known to be innovative and therefore faces the pressure of “ongoing innovation”. The problem with this is that

sometimes the ‘value adding space’ within an established product category becomes limited - take the iPad mini, for example. The result of introducing the new iPad mini led to the cannibalisation of the earlier iPad. To help avoid this, marketers and product development experts need to deconstruct their products and business models to look for ways in which they can move sideways into new value adding spaces, with innovative but complementary products or apps etc.

- **We live in a world of incessant innovation; can companies guarantee immediate customer value under such time pressure to innovate?**

In short, no. By making sidesteps into new customer value creating domains, you may have to accept temporary sacrifices. The example of Apple’s launch into maps illustrates this point in my article because unlike Google, Apple had no experience in geo-data and there were lots of mistakes as a result. The making of mistakes is an important learning curve for businesses, though, and often proves to be the best source of getting in-depth feedback from customers. Making mistakes can create opportunities for improving new software or functionality well beyond what would have been possible

before, but the reputational damage can be severe.

■ **What can marketers learn from this research?**

Always make sure you keep some degree of flexibility and freedom and try not to get squeezed by expectations of what the past dictates you should do, and what the future brings. Committing to a certain strategic path and “exploiting” it for some time can

bear fruit, but not at the cost of “exploring” new innovative sidesteps. As explained in the article, value engineering is and will be the only way to work on a level that is detailed enough to explore the best options, by weighing up the benefits and costs for customers whilst establishing what the sacrifices and returns might be for the companies.

Copyright (c) 2013 The European Marketing Confederation. All rights reserved.

To read the “translation into practice” written by Professor Marc Logman, please contact the EMC member in your country; **United Kingdom** – The Chartered Institute of Marketing ([CIM](#)), **Belgium** – Stimulating Marketing ([STIMA](#)), **The Netherlands** – The Netherlands Institute of Marketing ([NIMA](#)), **The Netherlands** – The Sales Management Association ([SMA](#)), **Greece** – The Hellenic Institute of Marketing ([HIM](#)), **Switzerland** – The Swiss Marketing Club ([SMC](#)), **Sweden** – The Swedish Marketing Federation ([SME](#)), **Germany** – The German Marketing Association ([DMV](#)), **South Africa** – The Services Sector Education and Training Authority ([SSETA](#)).